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联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Speaking points for

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Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)

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Item 2

**Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to WSIS outcomes
at the regional and international levels**

**Substantive session on the WSIS+10 Review, pursuant to ECOSOC
Resolution E/2013/9 para 47.**

Background: In preparation of the discussions of item 2, CSTD produced an information paper and raised three questions for discussion:

1. To what extent has a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society developed in the ten years since WSIS, and how have WSIS outcomes contributed towards this?
2. What are the major challenges that have inhibited the emergence of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, and how effectively are these being addressed?
3. What should be the priorities for stakeholders seeking to achieve WSIS outcomes and progress towards the Information Society in the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

Whatever the question, it would be good to start with a short intro on our WSIS+10 event (more background on this at the end).

- Stress that the first World Summit on the Information Society Review (WSIS+10) Event *Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development*, hosted by UNESCO and co-organized with ITU, UNDP and UNCTAD in Paris in February 2013, marks a milestone in the WSIS+10 Review process.
- Highlight that its Final Statement *Information and Knowledge for All: An expanded vision and a renewed commitment* was developed through an inclusive multistakeholder process and adopted at the Event by consensus. The Statement was later endorsed by Member States at the UNESCO General Conference at its 37th session, elevating it in status and making it a unique contribution to the WSIS+10 overall review process.

- *Express hope* that this contribution to the WSIS+10 Review process will be fully acknowledged in CSTD's resolution.
- *Underline* that we also contributed through a 60 page report to CSTDs work, which reviews UNESCO's Action in implementing the WSIS outcomes, including of the six Action Lines we are facilitating

1 A) We have moved and are moving from Information towards inclusive knowledge Societies:

By inclusive Knowledge Societies, UNESCO means societies in which people have the capabilities not just to acquire information but also to transform it into knowledge and understanding, which empowers them to enhance their livelihoods and contribute to the social and economic development of their societies in a coherent manner, based on shared values and principles. New technologies have created new opportunities for the creation, preservation, dissemination and use of information, but it is human activity that enables information to be transformed into knowledge and knowledge to add value to human experience and development. UNESCO's focus is on this human dimension of information and communication.

Inclusive Knowledge Societies are the way forward, as they build on the sum of human ingenuity, technical innovation and the power of information and knowledge. They have the potential to achieve lasting, positive impacts on education, economic prosperity, social inclusion and environmental protection, taking us all forward to a new era of peace and sustainable development. Taking advantage of these opportunities should be at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda and the forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals.

1 B) WSIS outcomes contributed to this through the

- establishment of multistakeholder approaches as a paradigm shift within the UN, as a new way to move things forward jointly
- framework given by Action Lines and the responsibilities taken by facilitators

2A) What are the major challenges that have inhibited the emergence of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, and how effectively are these being addressed?

Challenges:

Inclusive knowledge societies rest on four key principles that are central to all UNESCO's work in information and communication, including its work on the WSIS process. These are:

- 1) freedom of expression,
- 2) quality education for all,
- 3) universal access to information and knowledge, and
- 4) respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.

Challenges exist in all four areas. To take just two examples:

Freedom of expression:

In the past 10 years, more than 600 journalists and media workers have been killed – and the majority of them are not war correspondents. ([See link](#))

Education: Adult literacy is a basic pre-requisite for information and knowledge societies:

According to UNESCO's Global Monitoring report 2013-14, there were 774 million illiterate adults in 2011. The number is projected to fall only slightly, to 743 million, by 2015. Almost two-thirds of

illiterate adults are women. The poorest young women in developing countries may not achieve universal literacy until 2072.
([Here more](#))

More on the principles:

- The first, the **principle of freedom of expression**, should apply to both historical, contemporary and new forms of media, including the Internet. Our insistence on the plural form of Knowledge Societies rests on the conviction that there is no single uniform model, dictated by technology or market relations, to which all societies must conform. The nature of Knowledge Societies should be conceived as plural, variable and open to choice, and freedom of expression is inseparable from this vision.
- The second principle, **access to quality education for all**, is essential for building and developing the necessary skills, capabilities and capacities essential for effectively analyzing, using, creating and disseminating knowledge. Knowledge in turn is central to processes of development, progress and social cohesions in all societies. Access to education is a basic right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The third principle concerns **respect for cultural and linguistic diversity**. Languages and culture embody human knowledge and experiences which have developed over time in response to a range of environmental contexts and influences. This tapestry of expressions, enriched with meanings founded in cultural and linguistic pluralism, provides a rich base of content and is a record of our human heritage that links our past and present. This is essential

for giving meaning to human existence and also for the creation and production of new knowledge.

- Lastly, the fourth principle, **universal access to information and knowledge**, especially information in the public domain, is a prerequisite for broader participation in development processes. This provides the means for communities to tap into human knowledge to use, remix, create and innovate.

3) What should be the priorities for stakeholders seeking to achieve WSIS outcomes and progress towards the Information Society in the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

-First of all, key players have to introduce the notion of ICTs as a key catalysor for development into the post-2015 development agenda. So far, in spite of the efforts of many actors here present, this community has largely failed in this task.

-What should be priorities for stakeholders? A good enabling environment, meaning also a balance between different success factors: For ICT-related initiatives, only 1/3 of available budgets should go into hardware and infrastructure, 2/3 should be used for policy-, capacity- and content development. This balance is key to any success towards inclusive knowledge societies.

Annex: WSIS+10 Event

UNESCO to host the first WSIS+10 Review Event “Towards Knowledge Societies, for peace and sustainable development”, which was co-organized with ITU, UNDP and UNCTAD in Paris in February 2013. WSIS+10 offered 1450 participants from 130 countries 83 high-quality sessions (including plenaries) on diverse Knowledge Societies topics; 4 Heads of Intergovernmental Organizations opened the Event, many Ministers and other high-level government officials, the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, the Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce, Nobel Prize Dr. Pachauri, Prof. Jeffrey Sachs and the CEO of ICANN discussed latest and future developments in the field of ICTs, Sciences and the Internet.

The development during the Event and adoption by consensus of the Final Statement *Information and Knowledge for All: An Expanded Vision and a Renewed Commitment* as well as its later endorsement by UNESCO’s 37th session of the General Conference, the inclusiveness of the Event with 250 participants coming from Africa and a strong representation from all continents, plus some 800 remote participants from over 80 countries marked this Event as a milestone contribution to the 2015 WSIS Review and beyond. I hope and trust that this year’s CSTD resolution will duly recognize this contribution to the WSIS+10 Review process.



